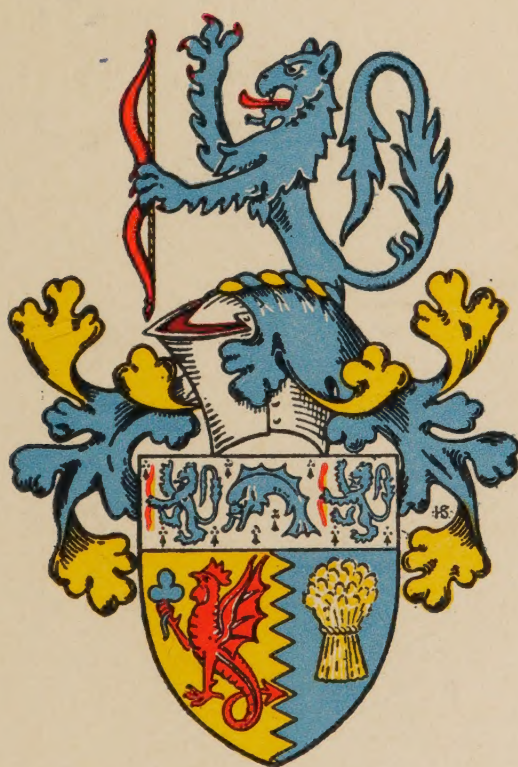


The  
Queen Elizabeth  
Hospital



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# The Queen Elizabeth Hospital

(A UNIT OF THE UNITED BIRMINGHAM HOSPITALS)

EDGBASTON  
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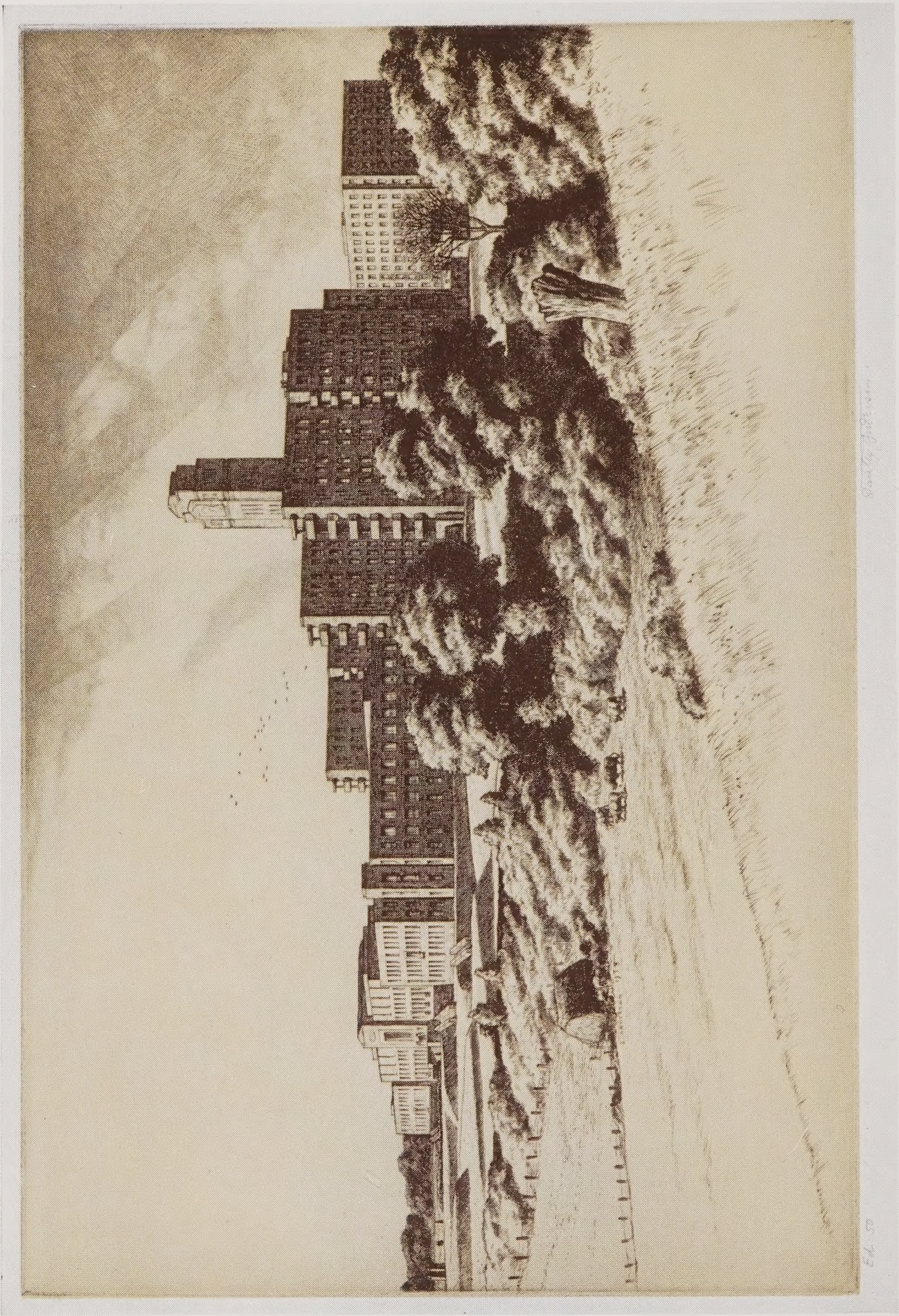
1950

SIXTH EDITION

(REVISED)

*This brochure was first published in July, 1939.*





THE BIRMINGHAM HOSPITALS CENTRE

We are indebted to the artist for permission to reproduce this delightful Dry-Point which shows the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and to the left the Medical School, as seen from the University.

DRY-POINT BY STANLEY ANDERSON, A.R.A., R.E.



# The Queen Elizabeth Hospital

## A SHORT HISTORY

“I name this Hospital the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.” Thus simply, in a sentence that delighted and surprised those privileged to hear it—for this Royal Christening was unexpected by all but a very few—Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth bestowed her name upon the great new block of buildings illustrated in the following pages. The occasion was the visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen which took place on the first day of March, 1939. In this happy manner a new chapter was opened in the life of Birmingham and in the history of the continuous fight against disease and suffering.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Medical School of the University of Birmingham, vast and imposing and judged by many to be the finest achievement of modern architecture in Birmingham, constituted the first instalment of the Birmingham Hospitals Centre Scheme. What was the Hospitals Centre Scheme, and how came this first instalment into being?

For the purpose of a brochure such as this, we may set the opening of the story in 1925. The two teaching hospitals—the Queen’s and the General—were faced with an increasing demand for beds which they were unable to meet, and both had under consideration proposals for extensions involving heavy capital expenditure. The Voluntary Hospitals Council, under the chairmanship of Sir Gilbert Barling, had approved the Queen’s Hospital scheme, and work had actually begun when a munificent offer of a pleasant site of 150 acres, close to the University at Edgbaston, was received from Messrs. Cadbury Bros. Ltd. for hospital purposes.



The Hospitals Council thereupon requested the governing bodies of the two hospitals to curtail their schemes for development, and "to meet and consider the outline of a scheme for a new Hospitals Centre". The invitation was accepted, and a committee was set up which in due course issued a unanimous report (generally known as the Grant Robertson Report, after its Chairman), which recommended that a Hospitals Centre should be established at Edgbaston under the joint control of the General and Queen's Hospitals, and that the two Hospitals should be amalgamated for all purposes. The University of Birmingham had long wished to transfer the Medical Faculty from Edmund Street to Edgbaston, and the Centre Scheme, the essence of which was the co-ordination of a group of hospitals with the Medical Faculty of the University, made such a move possible.

The Hospitals Centre Scheme having been accepted, an Executive Board was established in 1927, with Sir Charles Grant Robertson as Chairman. The estimated cost of the scheme was one-and-a-quarter million pounds, but it was decided to prepare plans for a first instalment, designed in such a manner that the full scheme could be completed at a later date, at an expenditure of approximately one million pounds. A joint appeal was made and it was agreed that, apart from donations specially allocated, five-sixths of the funds collected should be devoted to the Hospital and the remainder to the University of Birmingham for the erection of a new Medical School. The magnitude of the proposal was fully realised, as well as the immensity of the task of those entrusted with the raising of such a huge sum.

There followed three years of preliminary work, the crystallising of ideas, discussion of ways and means, and investigations of the all-important matter of finance. In 1930 a public appeal was launched. The scheme was laid before leading citizens and members of the public at a Town Hall meeting on April 10th, 1930, and evoked a speedy and most gratifying response. Contributions were received from all sections of the community, and the fund soon attained an imposing figure. The years 1931 and 1932 were wasted in barren controversy, but after an impartial commission had completely vindicated the Hospitals Centre Scheme, work was begun on the site in September, 1933. Eleven months later, on October 23rd, 1934, came the



first of the three Royal visits to the Centre, when His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales laid the foundation stone of the Hospital, and cut the first sod on the adjoining site reserved for the New Medical School.

The second Royal visit took place on July 14th, 1938. The Duke of Gloucester, deputising for His Majesty the King who was ill, formally declared open the Hospitals Centre and the Medical School Buildings of the University.

The Board of the Birmingham United Hospital (legal effect had been given to the amalgamation of the two Hospitals by Act of Parliament as from January 1st, 1935), was accorded possession of the buildings by the Hospitals Centre Executive Board on November 24th, 1938. The former body issued invitations to all members of the Centre Executive Board and its Committees, to meet the Board in the Large Hall in the Nurses' Home. The President of the Hospital, Lord Dudley, presided and moved the following special resolution, which was unanimously resolved by the Board :

*“This meeting of the President, Vice-Presidents, the Board of the United Hospital and its Honorary Staff, specially convened for the purpose, extend to the Executive Board and Appeal Committee of the Hospitals Centre a most cordial welcome on this memorable occasion, and desire to assure them of the United Hospital Board's great appreciation of their untiring efforts over the past years, now brought to a successful issue by the handing over to the United Hospital Board of the first section of this great Hospitals Centre : the United Hospital Board desires to include in this expression of appreciation all those in the City of Birmingham and throughout the country who so generously contributed to the Executive Board's funds, and to enter the whole of this resolution in the permanent records of the United Hospital.”*

Sir Charles Grant Robertson responded, and was followed by Sir Harry Vincent, who, in concluding his speech, said :

*“These great buildings are a memorial to the generosity of the public, and a visible expression of its gratitude for the services rendered in the past. The Hospitals Centre, with its close and intimate connection*



*with the University, marks a new era in preventive and curative medicine. The nation cannot afford to withhold from its people the fullest measure of hospital and medical service. It must consider health as one of its greatest assets ; it must provide all essential facilities, not only for curing those who are sick, but also for preventing sickness in future. The Hospitals Centre provides all these facilities, and it may justly be claimed as Birmingham's contribution towards a healthier and a happier nation.*

*We may also look upon the Hospitals Centre from another point of view. It repays an obligation we owe to the past—an obligation to those who laboured before us to provide this generation with hospital and medical services. It expresses, also, gratitude to those people for their efforts on our behalf. We have inherited these services as a sacred trust. We pass on to posterity our contribution. The Hospitals Centre is something more than a building. It is an ideal, an ideal which has required for its successful operation certain attributes. It required vision to foresee it, faith to believe in it, initiative to begin it, and courage and resolution to see it through."*

The first meeting of the Board of the United Hospital to be held in the Board Room at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital took place on December 13th, 1938, the Chairman, Lord Austin, presiding. The first patients were admitted on December 31st, 1938, and when Their Majesties the King and Queen paid their deferred visit to the hospital two months later, they found it occupied and fully equipped to carry out its beneficent purpose.

With the outbreak of war on September 3rd, 1939, the Hospital was called upon to accommodate just over double the number of beds for which the existing buildings were designed, in order to meet civilian and military requirements.

A great deal of additional and special work was accomplished during the comparatively quiet months of the early part of the war, but it was during the 'crowning mercy' of Dunkirk that the first large batch of wounded men was received. Then followed the periods of the air raids on the City of Birmingham. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital fortunately suffered no



damage, and was able to receive large numbers of casualties and also to accept many patients transferred from other hospitals.

The stirring events in North Africa brought the first battle casualties to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital from that theatre of war on February 6th, 1944. Later came the never-to-be-forgotten "D-Day" (June 6th, 1944), and at 1-30 a.m. on June 10th, the first wounded from Normandy were received. During that memorable year the Queen Elizabeth Hospital received 6,670 civilian patients, and in addition 5,696 cases from all branches of the Services. The latter were not only our own countrymen, but included Canadians, Americans, Belgians, Dutch, Free French, Russians, Poles, and also, for a time, a number of wounded German and Italian prisoners of war.

Sick and wounded service personnel continued to be received in the Hospital till the following year when, first in Europe and later in Japan, the long drawn out struggle came to an end with the complete and overwhelming defeat of the enemy. Slowly the British people turned to the arduous task of recovery, and gradually the Hospital returned to something approaching a peace-time establishment.

On July 5th, 1948, the Voluntary Hospital System came to an end, and a State Hospital Service came into operation as part of a National Health Service. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the General Hospital became constituent hospitals of the teaching hospital group of the Birmingham region.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new", but the Queen Elizabeth Hospital still stands as the embodiment of a partnership between hospital practice and medical research. Under the new régime it will continue to give the same devoted service to the care of the sick and suffering as it has done in the past. It will also continue to combine experience and knowledge for the achievement of fresh triumphs in the art and science of healing.

E. W. V.

*February, 1949.*





*The Main Entrance—Administration Building.  
In addition to the administrative offices this block contains the X-Ray department and also  
the Massage and Electrical department.*





*The Entrance Hall. In this hall is the Foundation Stone laid by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales and also a Bronze Panel recording the opening by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, who deputised for H.M. the King.*



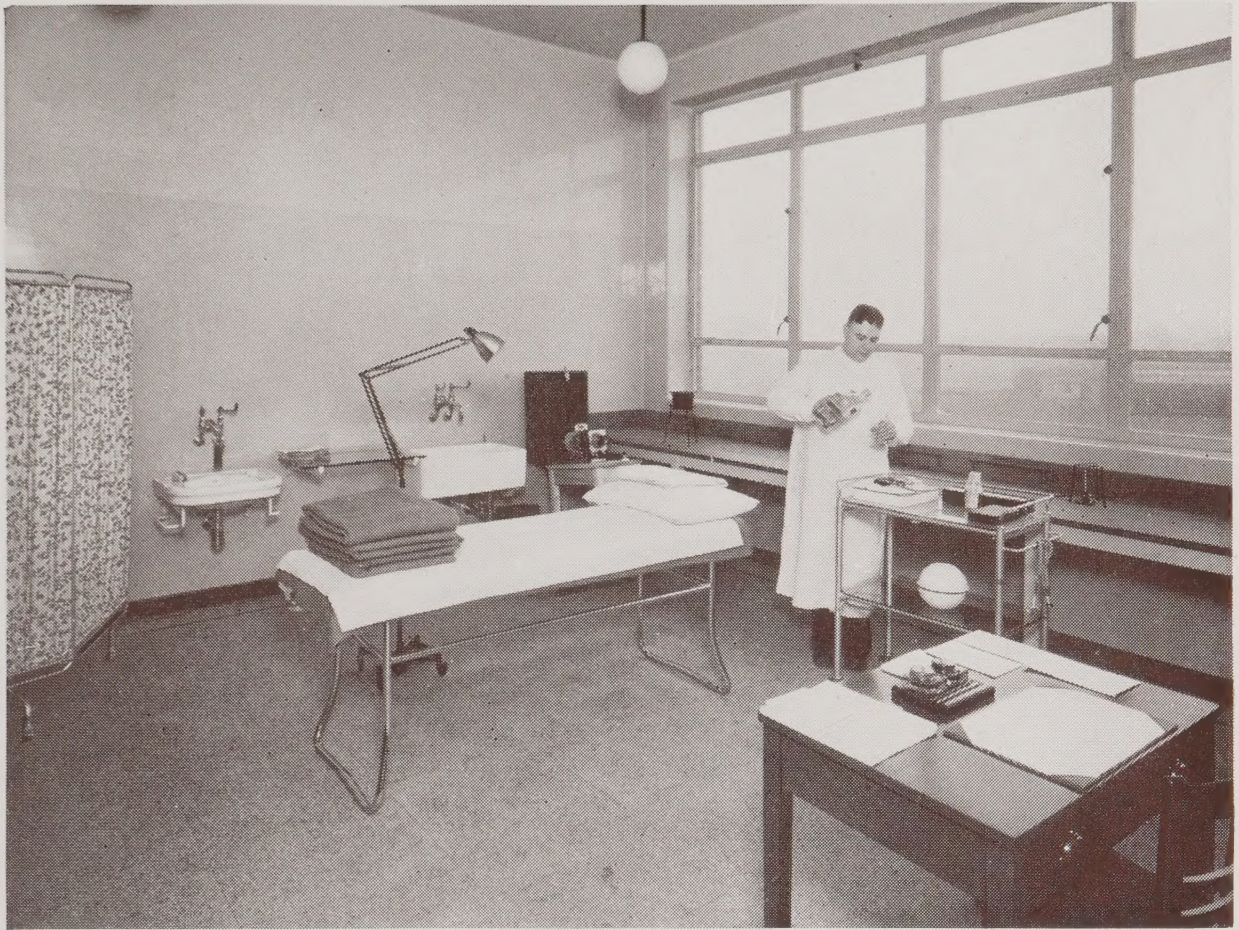
*The Board Room. By means of sliding partitions this room can be divided into smaller rooms for meetings of the various sub-committees.*



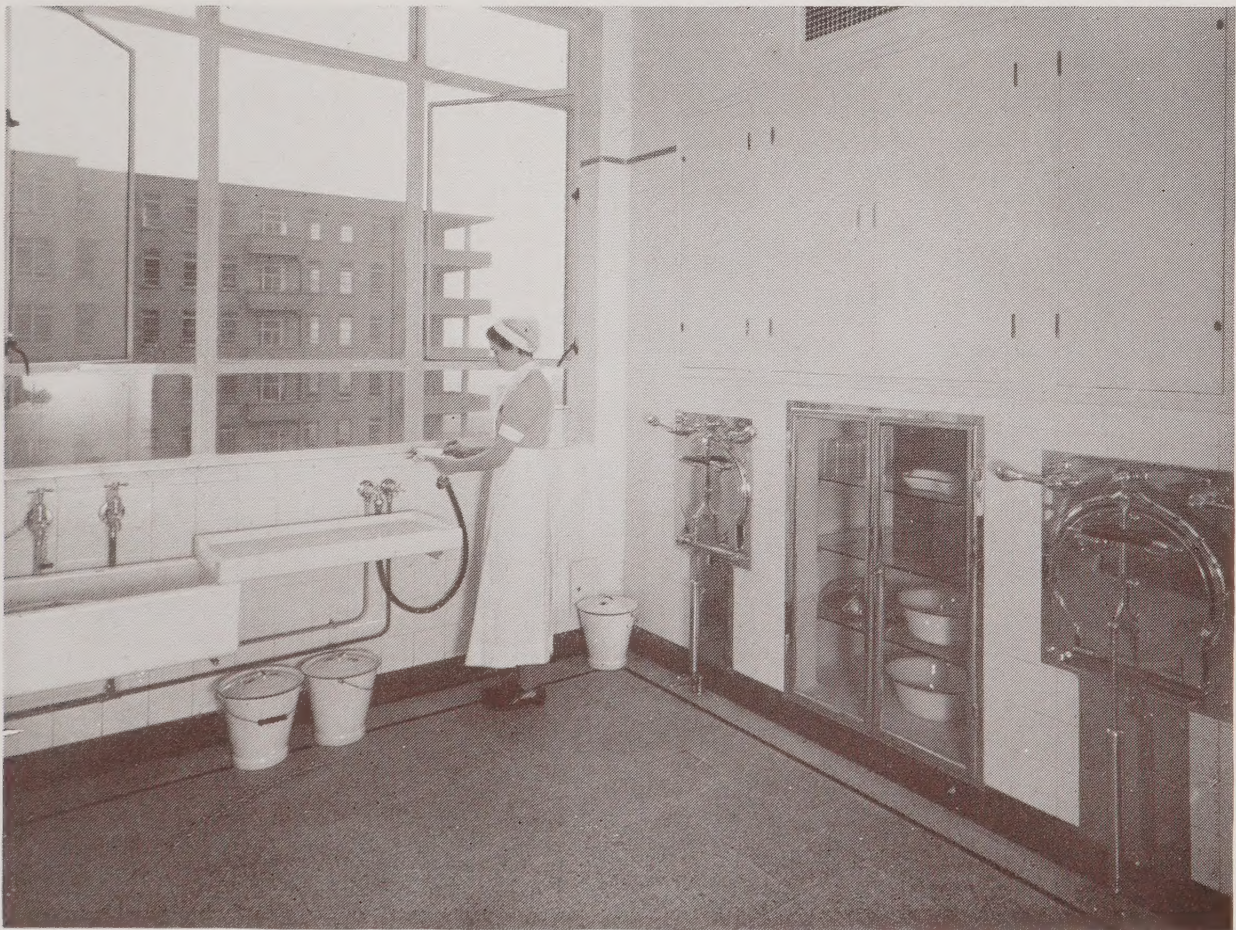


*One of the Main Medical Wards. The largest wards in the Hospital contain only 16 beds, and each is part of a unit of 60, complete with all necessary auxiliary services.*



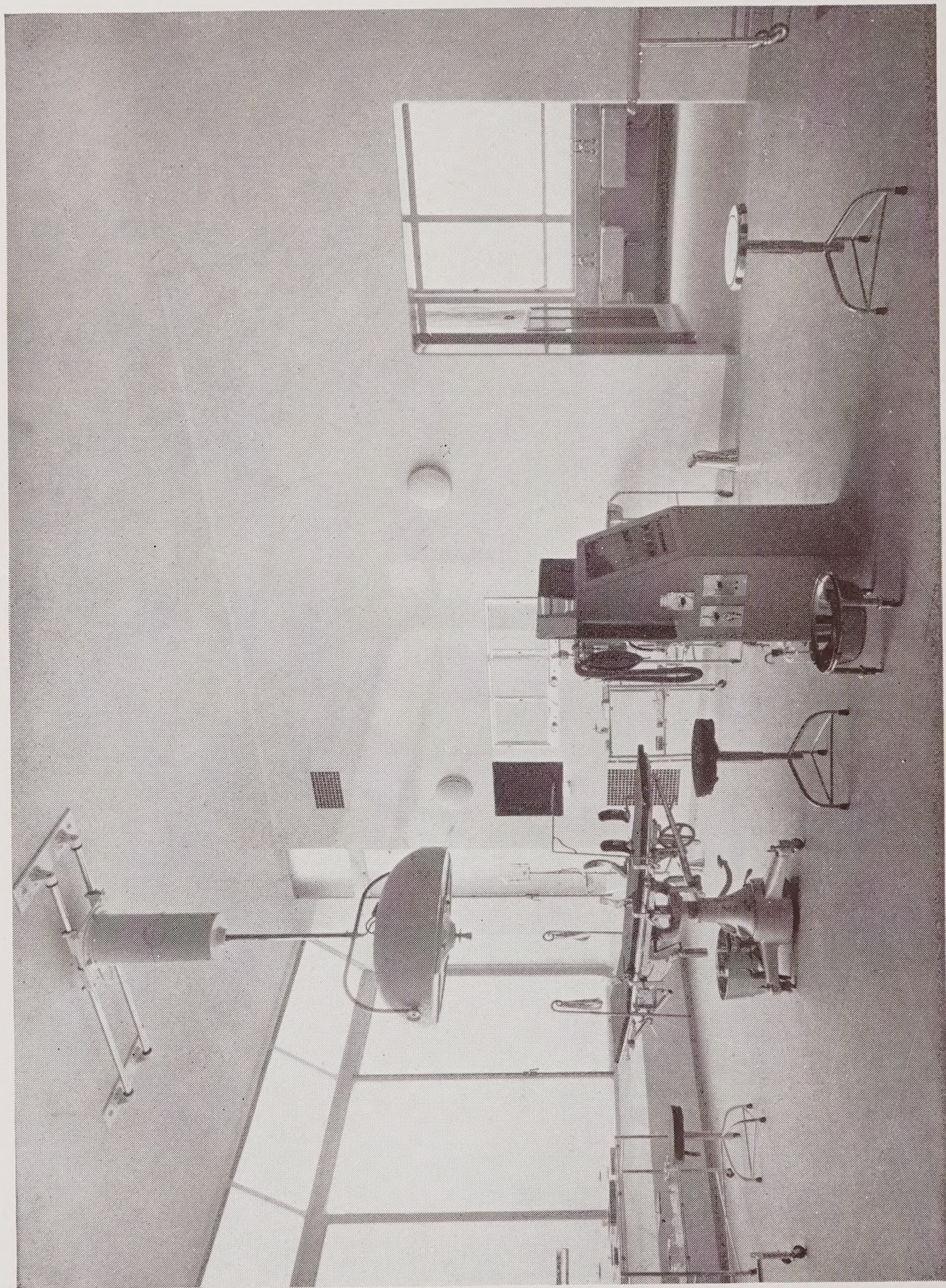


*A Ward Unit Examination Room.*



*A Ward Annexe.*



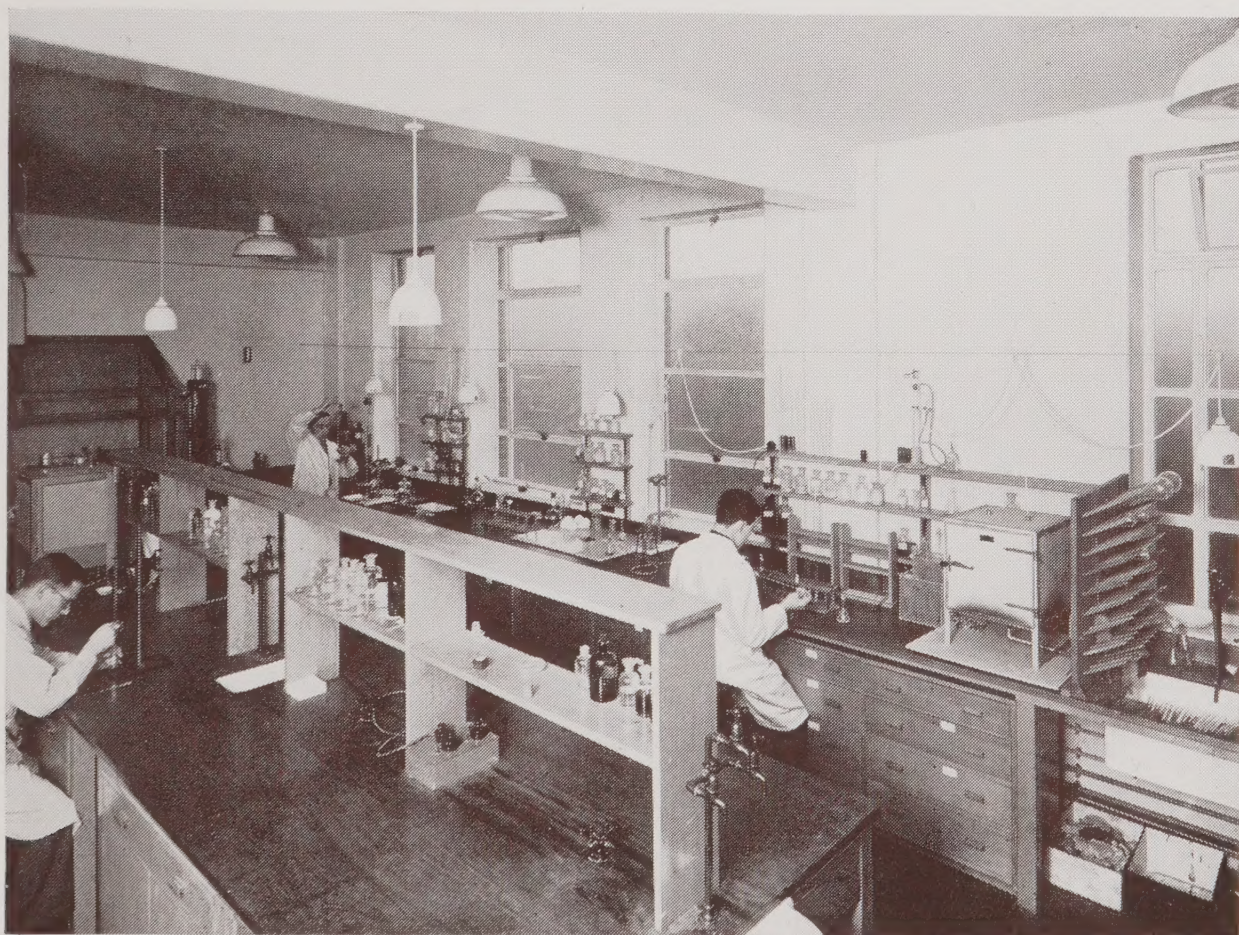


*One of five General Operating Theatres, each equipped in the most up-to-date manner and having Surgeons' Nurses' and Students' changing rooms adjoining. There are, in addition, five Specialist Theatres.*





*One of the Laboratories where Bacteriological and Haematological investigations are carried out.*



*The Biochemical Laboratory. The work of the Bio-Chemist is becoming increasingly important in the diagnosis and treatment of certain diseases.*





*A Surgical Ward. The total number of beds in the Hospital will be increased to 732 when the full building scheme is completed.*



*A Two-Bed Ward. Each sixty-bed unit contains two wards of sixteen beds, four wards of four beds, and six wards of two beds.*



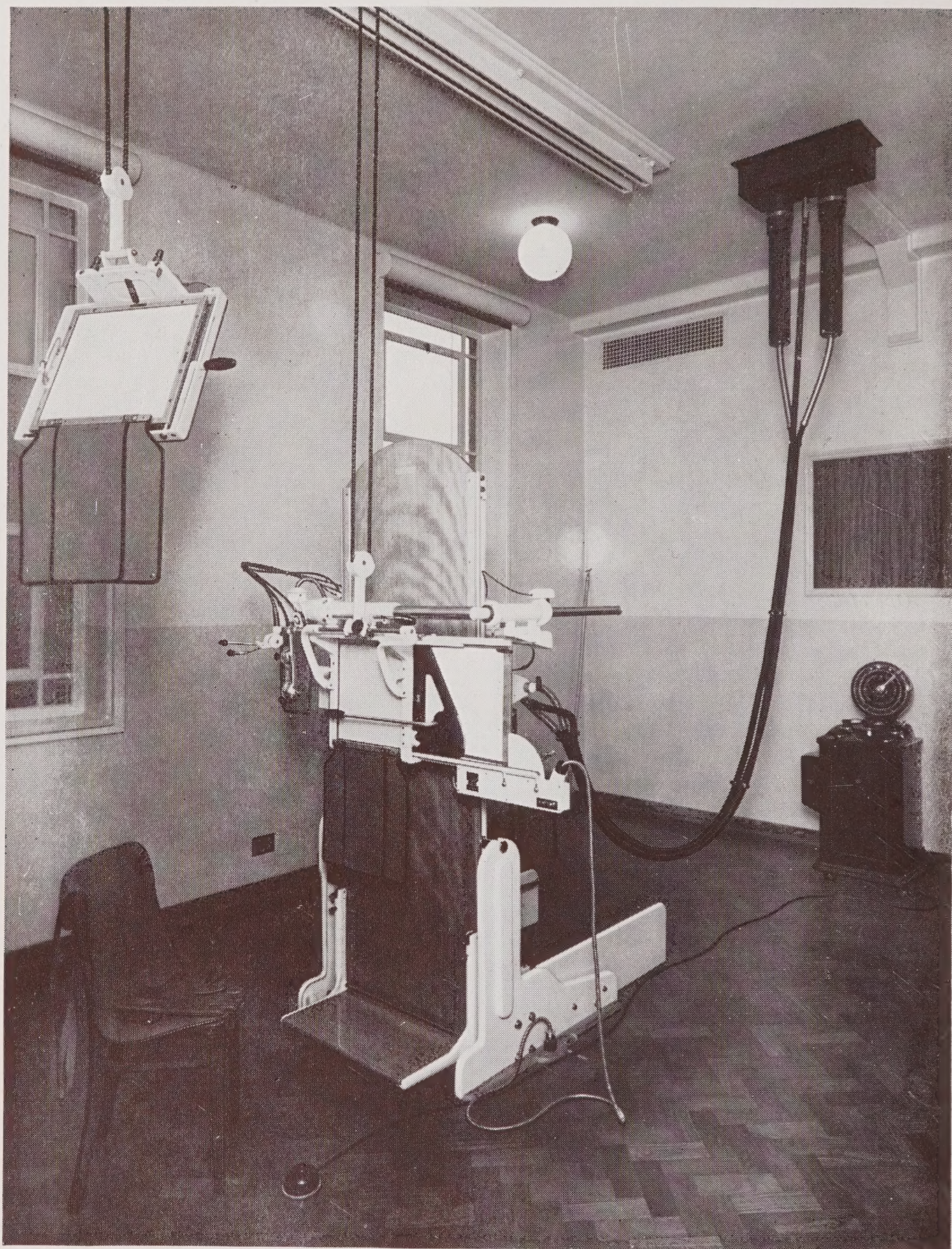


*One of the Ward Kitchens where tea and light meals for the patients are prepared.*



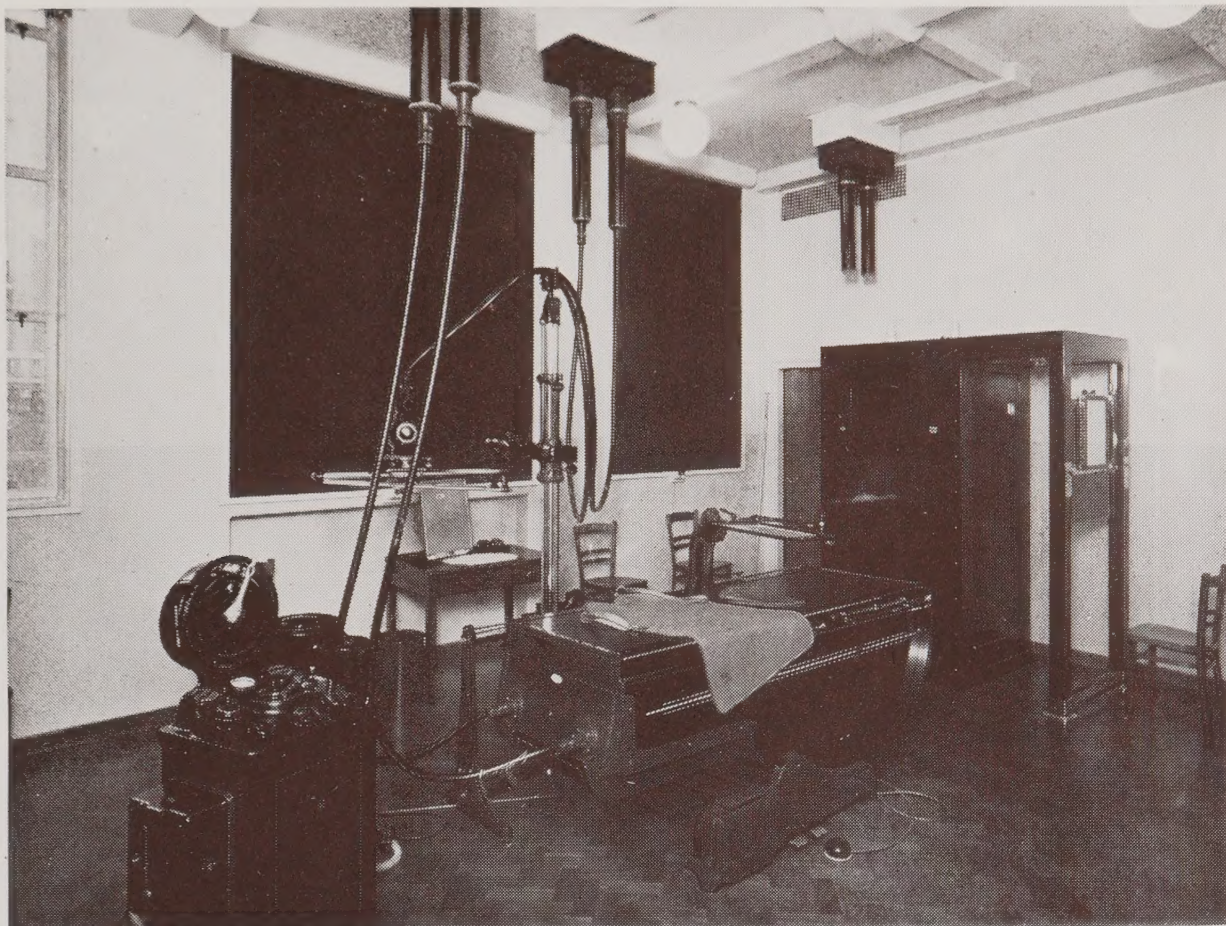
*The Dispensary includes a Manufacturing Laboratory, a Laboratory specially equipped for preparing sterile injections, spacious Store Rooms, and also a Classroom for Pharmaceutical Students.*



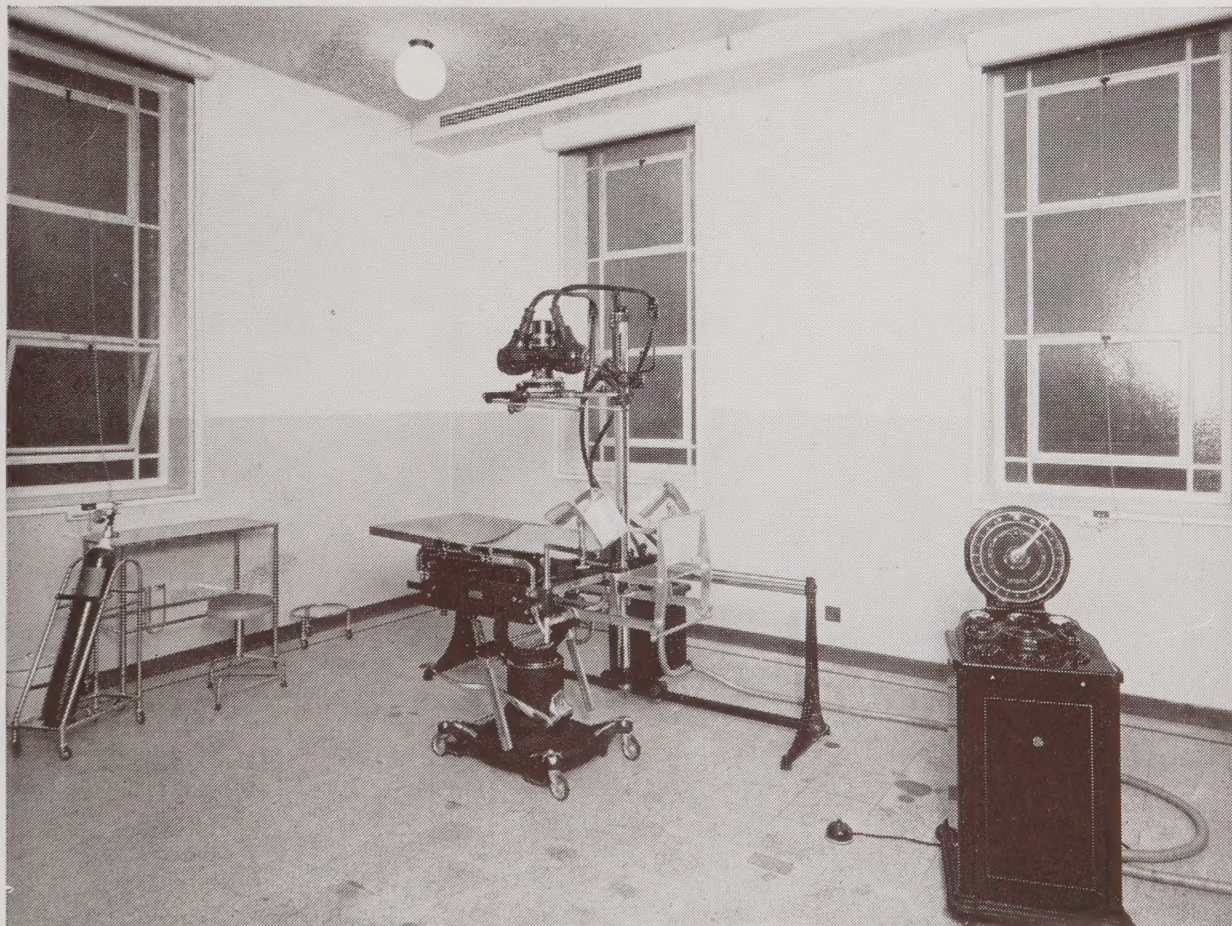


*The X-Ray Department. One of the Screening Rooms, showing a Siemens Pantoscope. This Department, which is equipped for the full number of 732 beds, contains a complete range of the most modern diagnostic and treatment apparatus.*





*The X-Ray Department. Another of the Screening Rooms, showing a motor-driven tilting table with an Impulse Timer and completely enclosed vertical screening stand.*



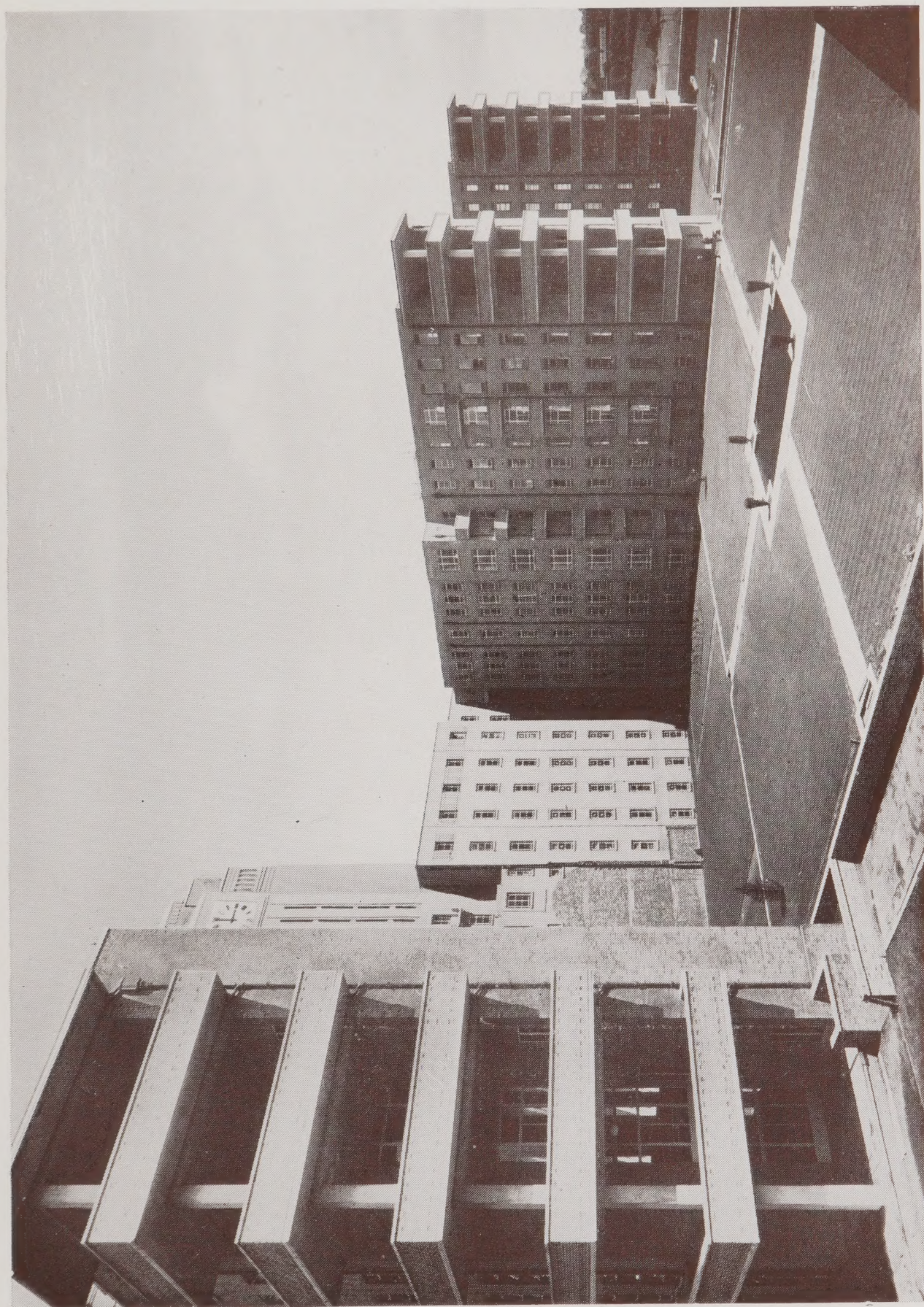
*The X-Ray Department. A view of the Urological Room. The X-Ray Department covers practically the whole of the first floor in the Administration Block.*





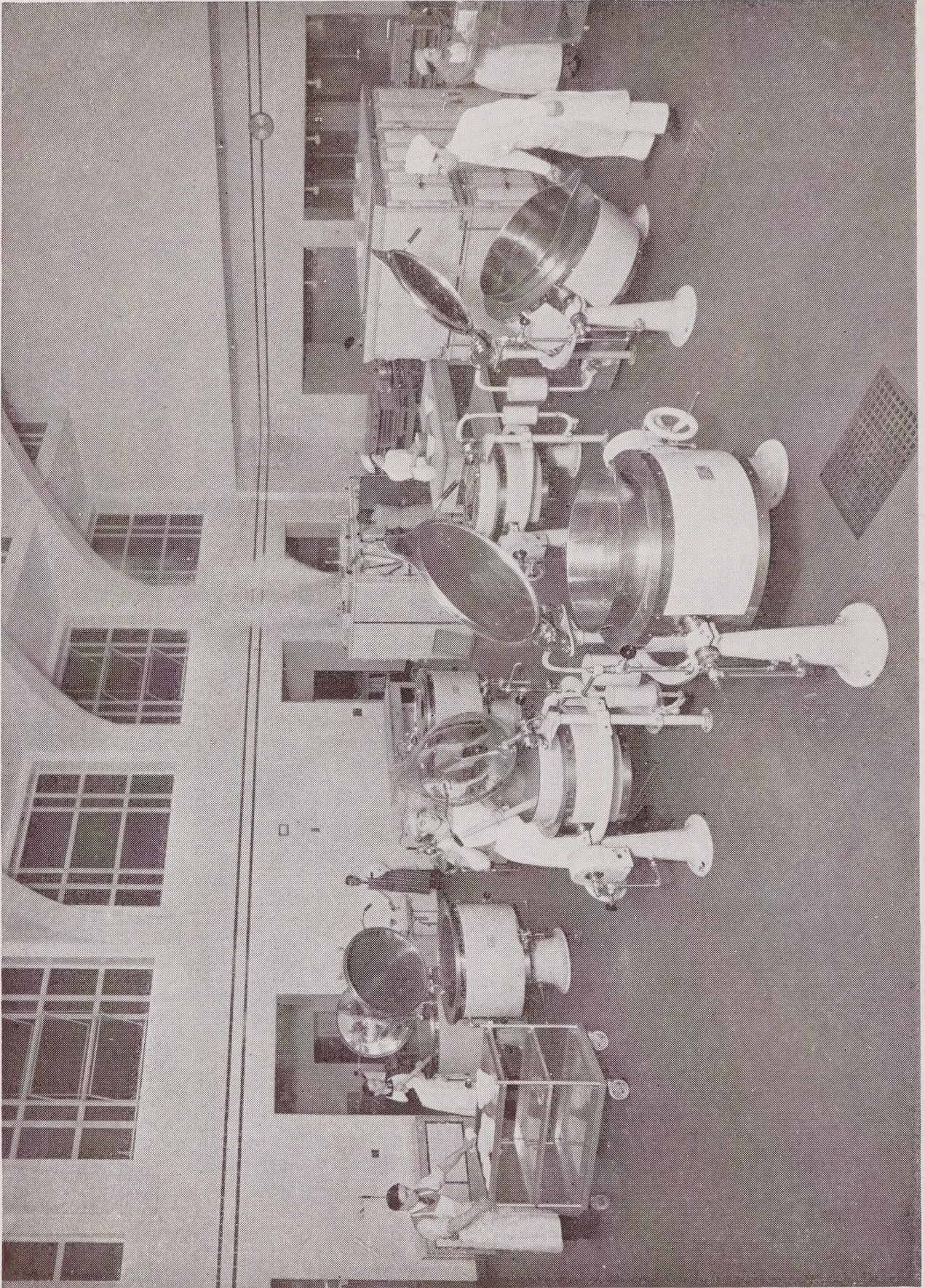
*A view between the Nurses' Home (on the left) and the Administration Building.*





*The Central Quadrangle dividing the East and West Blocks. It provides a quiet and secluded retreat for patients and staff. The darker area of brickwork below the tower indicates the site of the Chapel which will be built when funds are available.*





*The Main Kitchen, which is designed and equipped to serve the completed Hospital of 732 beds.*



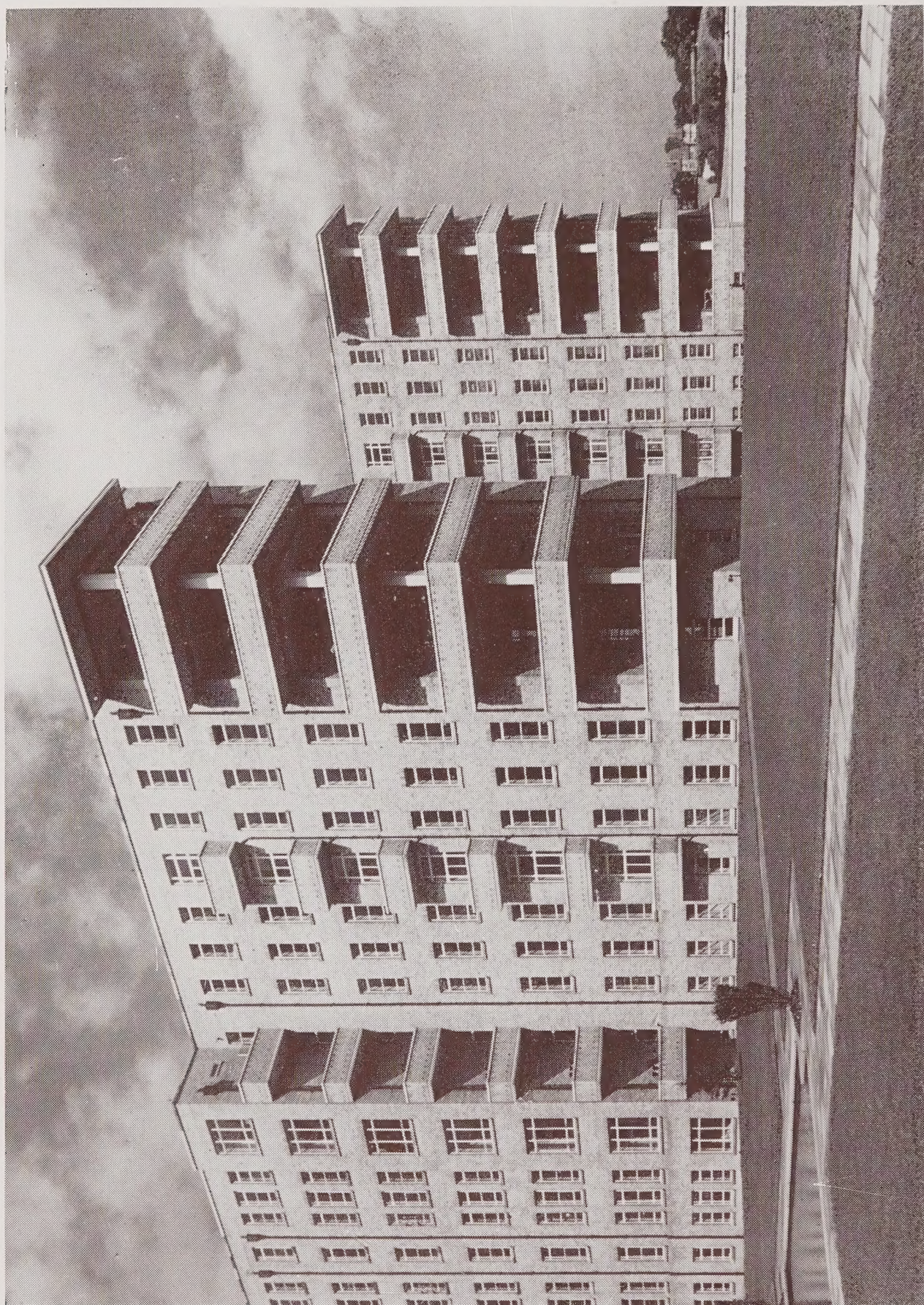


*Another view of the Main Kitchen. The cooking is carried out chiefly by gas and steam, and much of the equipment is in stainless steel.*



*Special Diet Kitchen. Dietetics play an important part in the treatment of certain diseases, and special diets are prepared for individual patients under the supervision of a skilled Sister Dietician.*





*A view of the Medical Block showing the Sun Balconies. This portion of the Hospital is named after Sir Harry Vincent, to commemorate his work and gifts towards the foundation and building of the Hospital.*





*The Main Entrance to the Nurses' Home and Training School. The entire cost of this fine building was generously borne by Lord Nuffield, after whom it is named.*





*Recreation Room, Nurses' Home. This magnificent room can be divided by means of partitions to form two separate rooms at each end, with a large central portion as shown in the photograph.*



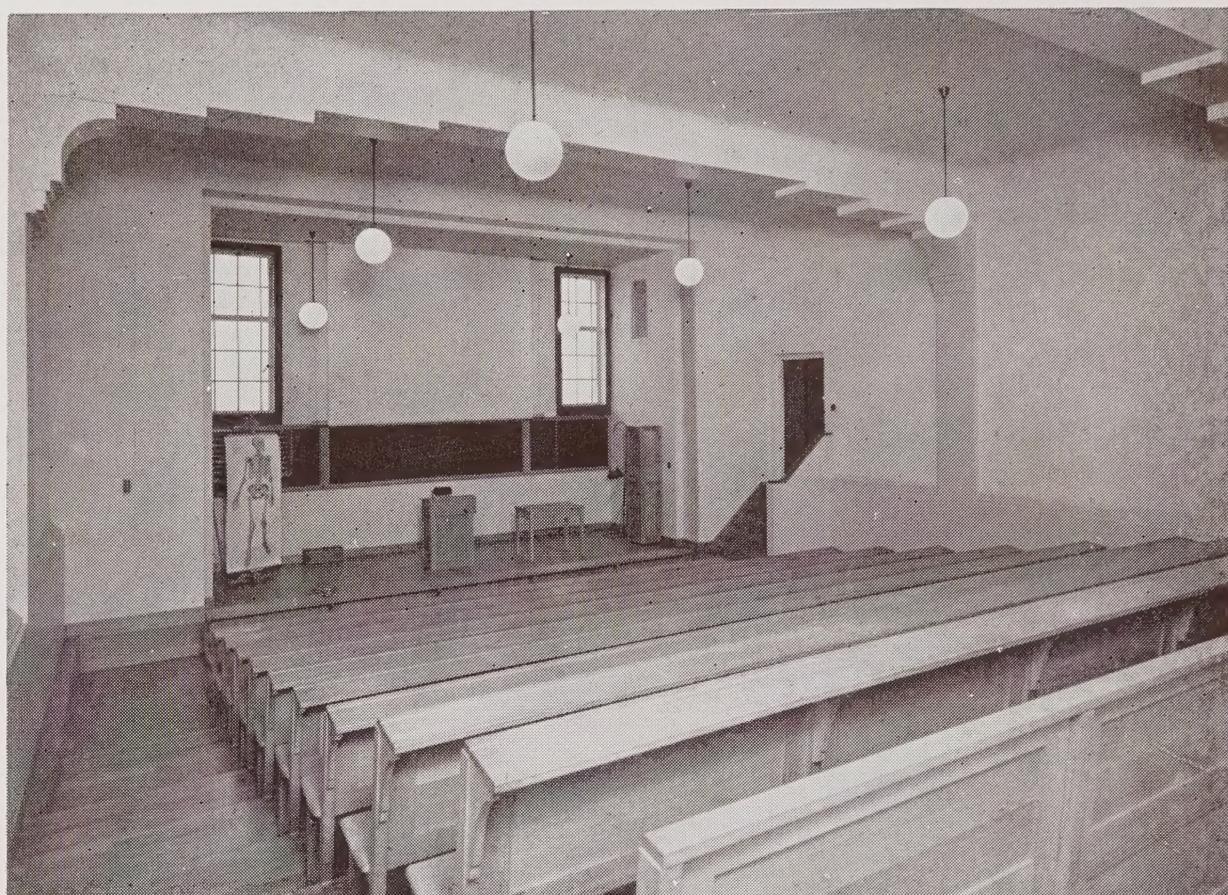


*Recreation Room, Nurses' Home. The Recreation Room, when opened to its fullest extent, makes a splendid ballroom for the Nurses.*



*Dining Room, Nurses' Home. The Nurses take their meals in this room, and a separate dining room is provided for the use of Sisters.*





*The Lecture Theatre. This theatre has seating accommodation for 120 Nurses.*



*A Nurse's Bedroom. Each bedroom is comfortably furnished with a built-in wardrobe and a combined desk and dressing table.*





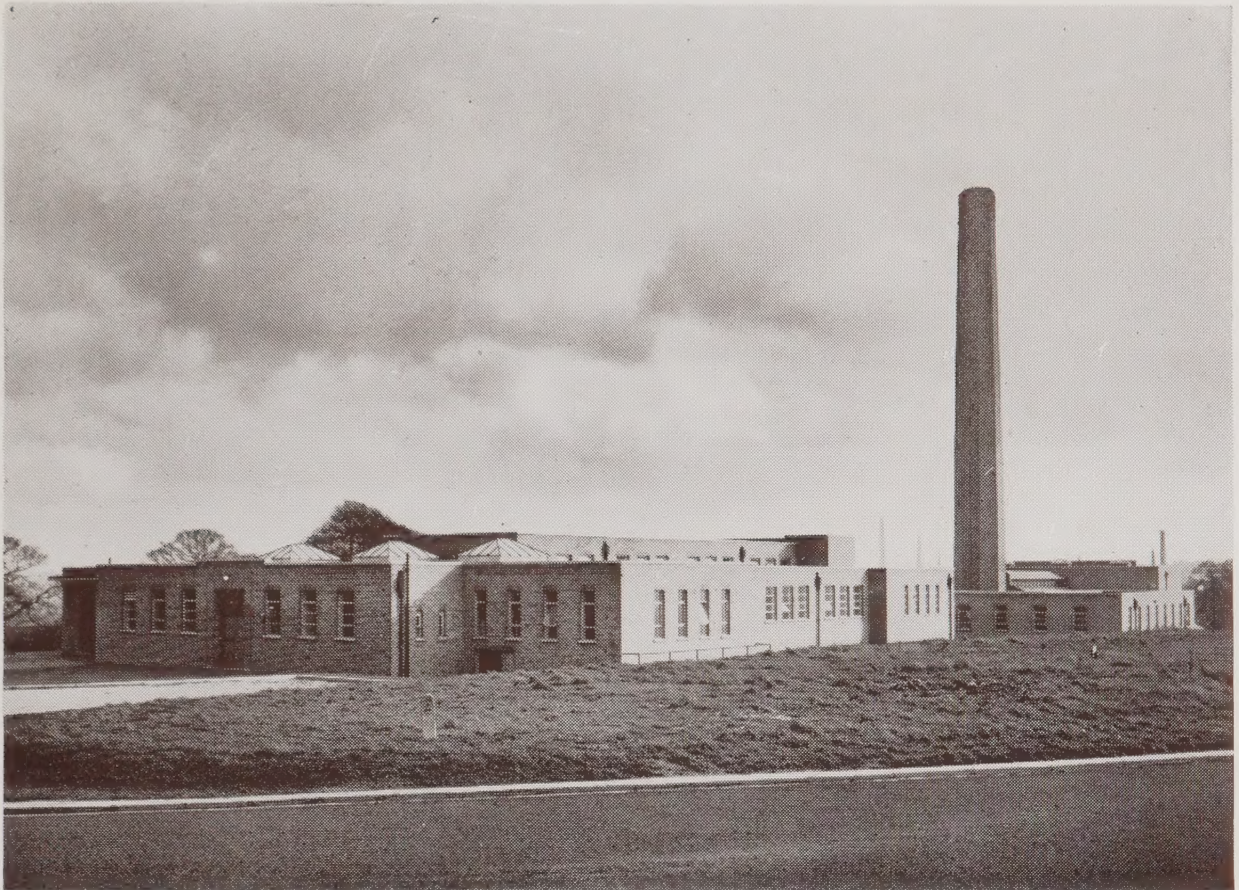
*The temporary Chapel. This room has been dedicated to serve as a Chapel until sufficient funds are forthcoming to build the main Chapel provided for in the original plans.*





*Boiler House. Four 30ft. x 9ft. Lancashire Boilers are required to meet the heating and lighting requirements of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Medical School.*





*The Laundry (in foreground) and Boiler House. The services from the Power House to the Hospital are conveyed a distance of 685 yards through an underground duct.*



*The Laundry is fully equipped with modern machinery, and is able to deal with the vast requirements of the Hospital.*





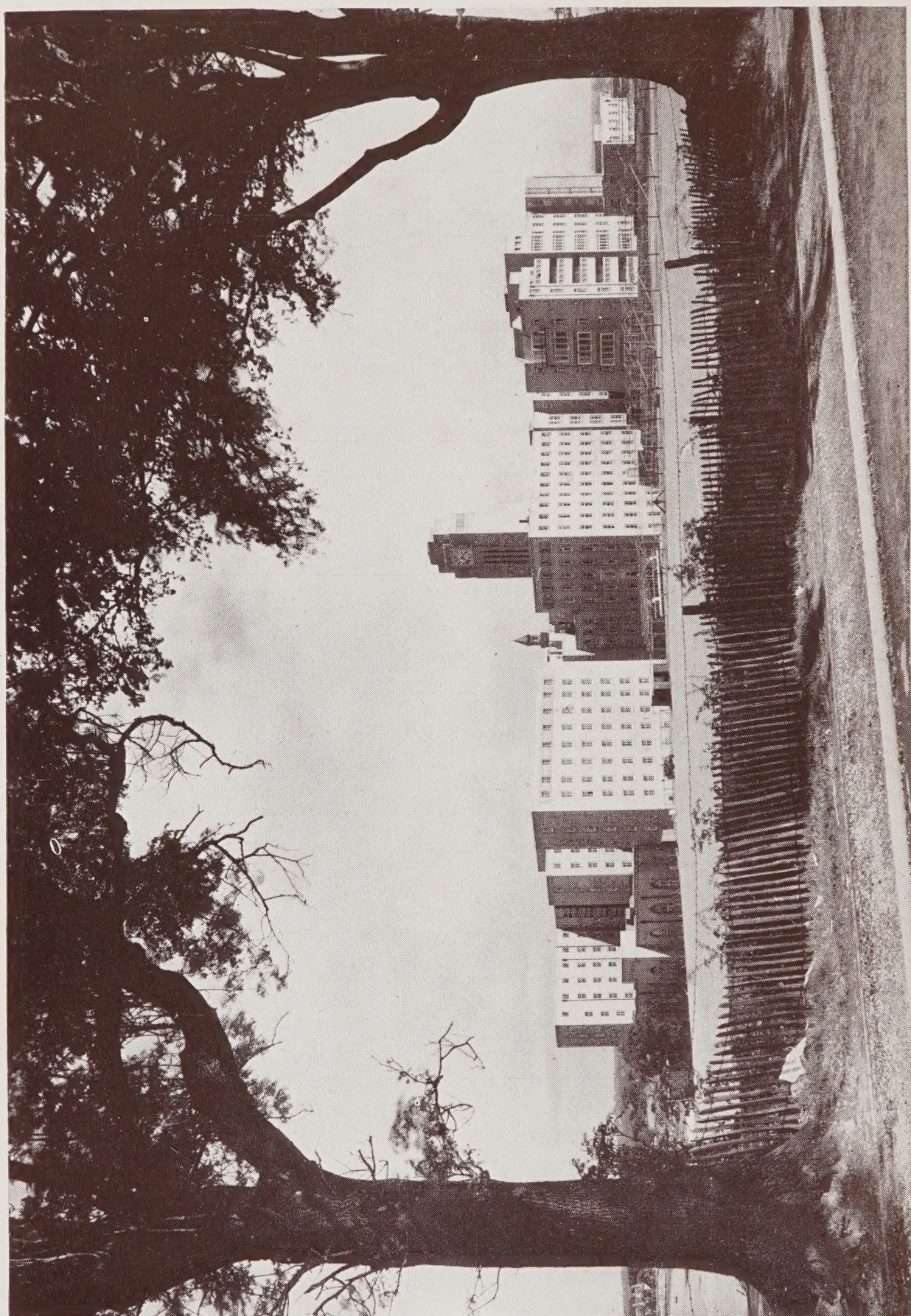
*The Medical School of the University of Birmingham. The Medical School and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are separated only by a quiet and spacious quadrangle. A covered way leads from the School to the Hospital.*





*The Main Entrance of the Medical School. The sculpture above the doorway represents Æsculapius bearing the shield of the University of Birmingham.*





*A view of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital from the north-west. The Hospital is in close proximity to the University of Birmingham, the tower of which can be seen to the left of the Hospital tower. It is surrounded by green fields and stands 500 feet above sea-level.*







